

# *ENCON POLICE*



## *2005 ANNUAL REPORT*

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
Department Of Environmental Protection  
Division Of State Environmental Conservation Police



***Governor M. Jodi Rell  
State of Connecticut***

***Commissioner Gina McCarthy  
Department of Environmental Protection***

***Deputy Commissioner David K. Leff  
Branch of Environmental Conservation***

***Bureau Chief Thomas Morrissey  
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation***

***Colonel Eric C. Nelson  
Director  
Division of State Environmental Conservation Police***

## **DEDICATION**

*The 2005 Annual Report is dedicated to our youth, the future caretakers of our outdoor heritage. These future sportsmen and women of tomorrow will be responsible for protecting our natural resources as we know it today. As responsible adults and parents it is incumbent upon all of us to teach our children proper ethical behavior while engaged in hunting, trapping, fishing, boating and recreational vehicle operation. The Environmental Conservation Police Division dedicates numerous hours to public outreach programs that target children and young adults to help them understand the laws and regulations that apply to the aforementioned activities and better prepare them for the future role as caretakers.*



**EnCon Police Officer Paul Hilli and 3 Black Bear Cubs**



## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Dear Reader,

The Division of State Environmental Conservation Police (EnCon Police) within the Department of Environmental Protection performs a variety of missions and tasks directly affecting Connecticut's economy and quality of life. In addition to information concerning the accomplishments and activities of the EnCon Police this 2005 Annual Report provides some insight into those missions and tasks.

The fundamental mission for which the precursor law enforcement entity of the EnCon Police was formed, fisheries and game protection and enforcement, continues to be the principal reason individuals choose this profession. An interest in conservation law enforcement typically begins with a love for nature and a background in fishing, hunting or trapping. For most people a love for nature and the desire to partake of it wisely is passed along to them by family members and friends while growing up.

Our youth are the future caretakers of our natural resources and our outdoor sports heritage. To be good caretakers they must have practical background and knowledge of nature, and this comes from being outdoors and partaking of the outdoor sports with other people that can teach the skills needed to become good caretakers. We all have a vested interest in the future of our natural resources, whether for our families or ourselves. I urge you to take advantage of every opportunity to teach our youth about nature, the outdoors or the art and skills of the outdoor sports. Give them the opportunity to take part in the many excellent programs that are available to learn about outdoor skills and nature. Offer them an alternative to video games and TV and help them become good caretakers. Practice and teach our youth good ethics so they may help protect our natural resources and preserve our outdoor sports heritage.

I am personally grateful to all who took the time to teach me about hunting, fishing, trapping, the outdoors and nature. Their involvement helped steer me to a rewarding career and gave me the opportunity to help protect our natural resources and to share my knowledge with our youth in hope that they may carry on where I leave off.

I consider it an honor and pleasure to serve as the Director of the Division of State Environmental Conservation Police. I thank the officers and staff of the Division for their continued efforts, their professionalism and their dedication to duty.

Sincerely;

Col. Eric C. Nelson  
Director  
State Environmental Conservation Police

### **CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION POLICE OFFICERS**

Many people do not know what an Environmental Conservation (EnCon) Police Officer is or what they do. Some people may recognize them by their old title of “Game Warden.” Traditionally the Connecticut EnCon Police Officer has been charged with the responsibility of enforcing the State’s fish and game laws. As Connecticut has grown and changed the role of the EnCon Officer in law enforcement has expanded. Duties now include the enforcement of the laws and regulations that concern boating, motor vehicle, criminal and public safety. Connecticut EnCon Police Officers now assist and act as back up for State and Municipal Police Departments in narcotics enforcement, domestic disputes, assaults and many other law enforcement functions and are the primary response units to assist the United States Coast Guard.



**EnCon Police Division Uniforms**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of the Division of State Environmental Conservation Police is the protection of the public and our natural resources through the efficient and effective use of Division resources for education and public outreach, the prevention of crime and accidents and the enforcement of laws and regulations.

### **Goals**

Goal 1: To fairly and impartially enforce state and federal laws and regulations.

Goal 2: To enhance the protection of the public and our natural resources through cooperative crime prevention and awareness efforts with constituency groups and the public.

Goal 3: To promote a progressive working environment through, training, career development and equal opportunity for advancement.

Goal 4: To maintain the professionalism of officers and staff and promote public service.

Goal 5: To promote cooperation with other disciplines both inside and outside the Division.

Goal 6: To acquire and maintain technology and equipment to improve efficiency, effectiveness and safety.

## **FISH AND GAME ENFORCEMENT**

Connecticut EnCon Police Officers not only have the responsibility of enforcing Connecticut's fish and game laws and regulations, but are also Deputy Special Agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service and as such may also enforce U.S. Federal Codes concerning the taking of fish and wildlife. Their duties in fish and game enforcement include a wide range of activities from checking sporting licenses to undercover assignments investigating suspected violations of fish and game law.



**EnCon Police Officer Tate Begley**

The purpose of enforcing fish and game laws is to ensure that the state's wildlife and fish populations are not harvested in excess or illegally exploited for commercial gain. Excessive harvesting or exploitation of a species can lead to an overall decline of the species population or contribute to the extinction of a species. Through the enforcement of fish and game laws and regulations EnCon Police Officers help to maintain stable populations of fish and wildlife species for future generations to enjoy.

## **BOATING**

EnCon Police Officers are responsible for patrolling all waters within the State and Long Island Sound for recreational boating safety enforcement. EnCon Police Officers enforce state boating laws and regulations to ensure a safe and enjoyable boating experience for the many recreational boaters that enjoy Connecticut waterways each year. To enhance the safety of boaters, EnCon Police Officers inspect boats for compliance with safety equipment requirements and check boat operators for compliance with boat operator certification requirements.

EnCon Police Officers utilize various sized patrol vessels to patrol Connecticut's waters. A new 27' Safe Boat patrol vessel, powered by twin 250 horsepower outboard motors, is equipped with a 360 degree infrared camera and provides EnCon Police Officers with all weather capability for enforcement and search & rescue missions on Long Island Sound.



**27' Safe Boat**

EnCon Police Officers also investigate boating accidents that occur on Connecticut waters. In 2005 EnCon Police Officers investigated 58 boating accidents. The Division maintains a "Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit" (B.A.R.U.) whose members reconstruct boating accidents that involved the death or serious physical injury of a person. The B.A.R.U. consists of 10 officers supervised by a sergeant, all of whom are specially trained in the field of boating accident reconstruction.



**BARU Members Conducting an Investigation**

The Division is responsible for oversight of lake authority marine patrol units on Lake Candlewood and Lake Housatonic. These lake patrol units work under the supervision of a EnCon Police Sergeant who coordinates their patrols and training activities. Each lake patrol officer must successfully complete a 60-hour training course that provides



comprehensive training in boating laws, B.U.I. enforcement, vessel boarding procedures, officer safety and first aid. In addition to training lake patrol officers the Division provides EnCon Police Officers to serve as instructors for the Boating Safety Division's law enforcement training programs for marine police units.



**23' Sea Ark**

## **COMMERCIAL FISHING**

EnCon Police Officers are responsible for enforcing Connecticut's laws and regulations pertaining to the commercial harvesting of fish and shellfish.

As Deputy Special Agents of the National Marine Fisheries Service they may also enforce Federal Codes concerning the commercial harvesting of marine fish and shellfish. EnCon Police Officers routinely inspect commercial fishing vessels to ensure compliance with species limitations, licensing and permit requirements and other laws pertaining to the commercial fishing industry.



**Commercial Fisheries Vessel**

The EnCon Police Division's Marine District officers work closely with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Aquaculture and the United States Food & Drug Administration to help ensure that contaminated shellfish do not reach the consumer market. In 2005, EnCon Police Officers conducted 2,289 shellfish bed checks in 24 different towns.



**Shellfish Harvest**

## **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT**

EnCon Police Officers respond to reports of sick, injured or nuisance wildlife. Officers responding to such reports make every effort to save the life of the animal or to relocate the animal to a more suitable habitat to reduce conflict between the animal and humans. In the case of injured wildlife, if possible, the officer will turn the animal over to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for care with the goal of eventual return of the animal to its natural environment.

EnCon Police Officers work with Department biologists to monitor Connecticut's growing black bear population and work to protect the public through education about living with black bears. In 2005 there were 1,788 reports of bear sightings and nuisance bear complaints. During winter months hibernating bears are located and data regarding population, health and the number of cubs with sows is gathered.



**Tranquilized Black Bear Cubs**

In addition to black bears, Connecticut has a growing moose population. EnCon Police Officers assigned to the Chemical Immobilization team are experienced at tranquilizing and relocating moose from urban to rural areas of the state. Moose require special handling when tranquilized. Officers must cover the moose with ice to keep the moose from overheating and in many cases provide the moose with oxygen during transport. Once a moose is relocated, officers and biologists monitor the moose until it can safely return to the wild.



**Tranquilized Moose Ready for Transport**

## **PARKS AND FORESTS**

EnCon Police Officers serve as the primary police agency within our state parks and forests. Criminal activity of the same type that occurs in urban or residential areas also occurs within our state parks and forests. Officers conduct patrol work within our state parks and forests to act as a deterrent to such criminal activity. When crimes do occur in these areas, EnCon Police Officers respond to the complaints and conduct investigations with the goal of apprehending those responsible for the criminal activity. During 2005, Officers responded to 2,146 incidents and made 985 arrests and issued 341 written warnings in state parks and forests.



**State Park Patrol**

## **RECREATIONAL VEHICLES**

EnCon Police Officers enforce state laws and regulations pertaining to the operation of snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles on state owned property and on frozen bodies of water. Officers utilize snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles and off road motorcycles to patrol for potential violators. In addition, the Division is assisted by the Connecticut State Police Aviation Unit to enhance enforcement efforts. In 2005, EnCon Police Officers responded to 598 incidents related to recreational vehicles and made 295 arrests and issued 66 written warnings for violations.



**All Terrain Vehicle on State Forest Property**



## **SEARCH & RESCUE**

During 2005, EnCon Police Officers responded to 57 Search & Rescue (SAR) and missing person incidents in Connecticut State parks and Forests, on the state's lakes and rivers and on Long Island Sound. These missions ranged from locating lost hikers to recovery of drowning victims to aircraft accidents in Long Island Sound. EnCon Police Officers provide a valuable service to local and state police, fire departments and the US Coast Guard in SAR missions due to their extensive knowledge of the remote areas of the state and our offshore waters. Officers utilize patrol vessels, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles to augment these search efforts.



**Search & Rescue Efforts**

## **HOMELAND SECURITY**

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the EnCon Police Division has been tasked with a number of responsibilities related to Homeland Security. As a result of these attacks, the mission of the United States Coast Guard has involved additional off shore patrol assignments. These assignments have had an impact on the Coast Guard's ability to respond to Search & Rescue missions on Long Island Sound. In order to protect public safety, and to assist the Coast Guard, the EnCon Police Division serves as their primary backup. EnCon Police Officers actively patrol public watershed areas by vehicle and on foot to enhance the level of security of public drinking water supplies. Officers also conduct waterborne security patrols of the major harbor areas of the state to augment U.S. Coast Guard resources to protect this infrastructure that is vital to Connecticut's economy. Officers also conduct Homeland Security patrols in the waters off the Millstone Point Nuclear Power Plant in Waterford. Officers patrol this area on a 24 hour/7day a week basis during times of elevated terrorist threat levels.





**Millstone Power Plant Patrol**

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The EnCon Police Division dedicates numerous hours every year in educating the public on such topics as the protection of our natural resources and safety concerns while enjoying the outdoors. EnCon Police Officers often appear at agricultural fairs, schools, fish & game clubs, businesses, civic and youth group organizations to accomplish this important goal. Officers utilize two mobile trailers that are stocked with educational materials and mounts of indigenous wildlife. In 2005, officers conducted 114 programs that reached 15,585 people.



**Sgt. Wolfe at North Stonington Safety Camp at Rocky Neck State**

## **NEW STAFFING**

The addition of three newly hired officers (trainees) was a major highlight for the Division in 2005. This was the first hiring by the Division since 2000. Two of the officers are assigned to the Marine District and the third is assigned to the Western District. These new officers will be in the Trainee phase for six to twelve months at which time they will work daily with an EnCon Police officer. Upon successful completion of the Trainee phase, they will be upgraded to the position of Agency Police Officer (APO). As an APO, these officers will work independently on Department owned properties. After a maximum of three years, these officers will be elevated to the position of Environmental Conservation Police Officer. The Division expects to hire two more officers in 2006.

## **EQUIPMENT/ UNIFORM ACQUISITIONS**

During 2005, the EnCon Police Division acquired the following equipment and uniforms:

- 27' Safeboat, powered by twin 225 HP Mercury outboard engines and equipped with radar, chart plotter, depth finder, 360 degree infrared thermal imager, emergency lighting, electronic siren, VHF radio, CSP Radio and DEP radio.
- Two 150 HP Honda four-stroke outboard engines to re-power the Marine District's 25' Sea Ark.
- Two 20 HP Honda four-stroke outboard engines to re-power two 14' patrol vessels for the Eastern District.
- Two Polaris 500 All-Terrain vehicles
- Twenty-three 2005 Ford Expeditions and five Ford Crown Victoria police interceptors as replacement vehicles for the fleet.
- Implementation of the new Tactical 5-11 administrative uniform for the Hartford HQ staff and District Captains.
- Implementation of the new Tactical 5-11 polo shirt uniform for the bicycle and personal watercraft patrol teams.

## **DIVISION STRUCTURE**

The Division of State Environmental Conservation Police is part of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation along with the State Parks Division, Land Acquisition & Management and Boating Safety within the Branch of Environmental Conservation of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Colonel Eric C. Nelson commands the Division. The Division is comprised of three districts, East, West and Marine and the Hartford Headquarters Command Staff. A Captain commands each District. East and West Districts are divided into two patrol sectors each of which is under the supervision of a Sergeant. The Western District has an additional Sergeant assigned to supervise Lake Authority marine patrol. At the end of the 2005 season, the Marine District was realigned from two sectors to three.



**Hartford HQ Staff**  
**Standing L-R, Sgt T. Lewoc, Secretary C. Gianni, Capt. R. Lewis**  
**Seated, Col. E. Nelson**

## **MARINE DISTRICT**

The Marine District covers the Connecticut shoreline towns from Stonington to Greenwich and includes the Connecticut waters of Long Island Sound. There are three sergeants, thirteen Conservation Enforcement Officers and two Conservation Enforcement Trainees assigned to the Marine District. Capt. Kyle Overturf is the District's Commanding Officer. Their responsibilities and duties include commercial and recreational fishing, shellfish, lobster, boating safety and hunting enforcement. These Officers are also responsible for all the law enforcement at State shoreline parks and campgrounds. Officers also assist in homeland security efforts by patrolling the major ports of New London, New Haven and Bridgeport and the area surrounding the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant. Officers work in close cooperation with Coast Guard Stations New London, New Haven, and Eaton's Neck to coordinate boating enforcement efforts, search and rescue operations, homeland security patrols, and commercial fishing enforcement. The Marine District coordinates multi-agency Boating Under the Influence enforcement efforts throughout the boating season with Coast Guard and local marine law enforcement agencies.



**Marine District Officers on Board the Patrol Vessel “James V. Spignesi.”**

Officers from the Marine District handled 2699 incidents in 2005, which included 977 arrests and 388 written warnings. They investigated 27 boating accidents including a fatality that occurred off of Groton. Marine District Officers also responded to numerous search and rescue operations on Long Island Sound including a plane crash off of Groton which killed four people and a fatal diving accident off of Mystic.

## **MARINE DISTRICT MAJOR CASES**

### **Marine Fisheries Violations**

On 5/4/2005, Environmental Conservation Officers Jeff Samorajczyk and Cindy Schneider responded to a complaint of illegal commercial fishing activity in Long Island Sound off of Norwalk. The complaint was that a charter vessel was fishing for black fish during the closed season. The officers responded on board the Norwalk Marine Police’s patrol vessel and found the charter vessel “James Joseph” anchored near buoy 28C. There were approximately thirty people fishing off the vessel. The vessel was boarded and officers found nine blackfish on board. The season for blackfish in Connecticut was closed. The captain of the charter vessel did not have a 2005 charter license as required. The captain was issued a misdemeanor summons for the violations and released after posting a \$250.00 cash bond.

On 8/16/2005, based on a complaint of illegal taking of striped bass, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Tom Bull and Ryan Healy assisted by the United States



Fish and Wildlife Agent assigned to Connecticut, established a surveillance operation of Clinton Harbor. The suspect boats were observed entering the port of Clinton and three subjects off loaded several coolers into a vehicle. That vehicle, occupied by two of the subjects, was tracked to New Bedford, Massachusetts where it was intercepted by the Massachusetts Environmental Police and agents from the National Marine Fisheries Service. The subjects had sold thirty-three striped bass with a total weight of 805 lbs. and ninety-one scup to a dealer for over \$1000.00. The subjects were arrested by the Massachusetts Environmental Police and the fish were seized as evidence. They both subsequently paid a of fine of \$1000.00. Officer Bull prepared arrest warrants for the three subjects for the Connecticut violations of conspiracy to sell striped bass, possession of striped bass over the daily creel limit, and commercial fishing without a license. Those warrants were served in December of 2005.

On 9/2/2005, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Bruce Gagliardi received a complaint that several subjects were in possession of striped bass over the legal limit in Westbrook. Officer Gagliardi and Officer Tom Bull responded to the area and after a short surveillance, checked four subjects unloading striped bass from a fishing boat. The officers found the subjects to be in possession of sixteen striped bass, eight over the legal limit. The officers' investigation revealed that the subjects had gone out fishing earlier in the morning, caught eight striped bass, brought them into shore, then made another trip in which they caught eight more bass. Each subject stated they had caught a total of four striped bass. Each subject was charged with two counts of possession of striped bass over the legal limit.

## **Hunting Violations**

On 11/5/2005, EnCon Police Officer Jim Kane was patrolling Halley Farm State Park in Groton with Sgt. Wolfe. Officer Kane was working a complaint of illegal deer hunting activity occurring in the park. At approximately 6:00 am, Officer Kane found a subject in the park dressed in full camouflage clothing carrying a rifle. Officer Kane stopped the subject and found him to be in possession of a .22 cal. hornet rifle along with other items associated with deer hunting. The subject admitted to deer hunting and was taken into custody by Officer Kane. The subject was a resident from Rhode Island and had been arrested in the area by EnCon Police Officers on two other occasions for hunting violations. The subject was transported to Groton Town Police Dept. for processing. He was charged with illegal deer hunting, hunting without landowner consent and criminal trespass in the third degree. He was released on a \$500.00 cash bond.

On 11/19/2005, EnCon Officers Jim Kane and Michael Tavares were checking for deer hunting activity in Stonington off of Rt. 234. The officers heard several shots in the area and approximately one hour later four individuals dressed in hunting clothing came out of the woods. They were dragging three deer, all of which were untagged. As the officers



were checking hunting permits and licenses, it was determined that one of the subjects that was hunting was a convicted felon. Two officers from Adult Probation responded to the scene and confirmed that the subject in question was a convicted felon and currently on probation for sexual assault. That subject was charged with criminal possession of a firearm and hunting with an invalid deer permit. He was transported to Troop E in Montville and was released on a \$2500.00 bond. Two other subjects were charged with Failure to Tag Deer and were released on the scene after posting \$100.00 cash bonds. The three deer were transported to Marlborough Headquarters and held as evidence.



**Officers Ramos and Wojcik  
With an Illegally Taken Deer That Was Seized**

## **EASTERN DISTRICT**

The Eastern District includes the towns in the eastern half of the state north of the Marine District. There are two Sergeants and eleven Conservation Enforcement Officers assigned to the Eastern District. Captain John Smutnick is the District Commanding Officer.

The officers assigned to the Eastern District handled 3020 incidents in 2005, which resulted in 926 arrests and 412 written warnings. Recreation fishing enforcement was an early focus of law enforcement efforts and generated 98 arrests and 97 written warnings.

Several high profile law enforcement programs were initiated in 2005 that included patrol of the Pachaug Forest campgrounds (49 arrests and 21 written warnings), Miller's Pond State Park (47 arrests and 5 written warnings) and Coventry Lake (45 arrests and 16 written warnings). The Coventry Lake enforcement initiative included hiring a Seasonal Conservation Officer who was able to use the Coventry Police Department Patrol vessel, which was docked on the lake.

Recreational vehicle enforcement included cooperative enforcement efforts with State Police Troop D, Troop K, Troop F, Willimantic Police and Putnam Police. EnCon

officers used ATVs, dirt bikes, and the State Police patrol aircraft in these efforts, which resulted in 172 arrests and 30 written warnings.

The fall season provided a very active deer hunting enforcement effort. Over twenty deer and twenty weapons were seized from deer poachers. These efforts resulted in 32 arrests and 19 written warnings for various deer hunting violations.



**Southeast Sector Officers**



**Northeast Sector Officers**

## **EASTERN DISTRICT MAJOR CASES**

### **Hunting Incidents**

On 5/21/05 at 9:30 a.m., EnCon Police Officer Bill Myers was dispatched to a possible illegal fishing complaint at Laurel View Reservoir in Middletown. A security guard at a nearby business had observed a suspicious vehicle parked in the area. Officer Myers was familiar with the registered owner of the vehicle and had arrested him previously for hunting and fishing violations. Officer Myers responded to the reservoir and found three people illegally fishing and issued them citations, but they were not associated with the suspect vehicle. He then met the security guard who showed him a surveillance camera tape, which showed the suspect vehicle had arrived at 7:40 a.m. with three occupants. One person exited the vehicle and hid an item under a bush nearby and two others went into the woods carrying shotguns. All three men were dressed in camouflage clothing. At 9:25 a.m. the men returned to the vehicle, retrieve the hidden item and left in the vehicle. Officer Myers proceeded to the vehicle owner's address in Middletown and questioned him on the previous actions. The subject admitted that he had been turkey hunting on the property without the owners written permission and that he did not have Private Land Turkey Permits. He was arrested on these charges. The second hunter had returned to his residence in Hartford. He was contacted by phone and returned to Middletown where he admitted that he did not have a hunting license, had shot a pheasant earlier that day even though the season was closed, did not possess Turkey Permits and did not have written permission to turkey hunt on private property. He was charged with all four violations.

On 11/6/06, EnCon Police Sgt. Mike Enright and Officer Eric Johnson received a complaint of Sunday hunting in the town of Killingly. They responded to the scene and encountered a suspect who was explaining to the complainant that he had been target shooting nearby in the woods. Upon further investigation the officers determined that the suspect and another subject had been "pushing" deer to two other men in tree stands and that they had shot and removed one deer from the scene. The other three men were contacted and returned to the scene with the deer and the rifles they used. The deer and rifles were confiscated and the four men were charged with Hunting on Sunday, Illegal Deer Hunting and Illegal Possession of Deer.



**Officers Attend Land-Trapping Training Instructed by Sgt. Dave Gregory,  
Vermont Fish & Game Department**

On 11/24/05, EnCon Police Sgt. Bob Zabilansky was checking hunting activity in East Haddam. He heard three shots and proceeded to the area where he found a hunter dressed in full camouflage clothing in a tree stand. Sgt Zabilansky asked the hunter where his fluorescent orange clothing was, and the hunter replied that he had just taken it off. When Sgt. Zabilansky told him to put the clothing on, he admitted that he did not have any. When asked whether he had shot any deer, the hunter pointed in the direction of a dead deer. Sgt. Zabilansky found two other dead deer in the area, none of which were tagged. The hunter was directed to tag two of the deer. A routine check of the rifle revealed that it had been stolen from a residence in East Hampton several years ago. The hunter was charged with Illegal deer hunting and Failure to Wear Fluorescent Orange. One of the deer and his rifle were seized. The East Hampton Police Department is conducting the stolen rifle investigation.

On 11/26/05, EnCon Police Officers Laura Gregonis and Dean Wojik were checking deer hunting activity in Enfield. While doing so, a vehicle drove up to Officer Gregonis and the driver, who was dressed in hunting attire, explained that he was there to obtain a permission slip from the landowner. During this brief conversation, Officer Gregonis could smell the odor of burning marijuana emanating from the vehicle. When she asked the operator if he had any marijuana, the operator opened the center console and produced a small bag of marijuana. A check of the operator's driver's license revealed that he was under suspension. A search of the vehicle revealed a loaded shotgun on the rear seat. A criminal history check revealed that he was a convicted felon. The 33 year-old suspect was arrested and charged with Loaded Firearm in a Motor Vehicle, Criminal Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Possession of Less than 4 oz. of Marijuana, and Operating a Motor Vehicle While Under Suspension. The drugs, shotgun, and ammunition were seized as evidence.



On 12/3/05, EnCon Police Officers Joe Ruggiero, Tom Bull and Raul Ramos were working with Regional Water Authority Police Officer Paul Ruggiero on Water Company Property in North Guilford. Officers Ruggiero, Ramos and Ruggiero were on foot patrol when they encountered a male lying on the ground covered in leaves in an effort to conceal himself. He was holding a rifle and admitted that he was deer hunting with his father, uncle and a friend. The hunter knew that he was illegally on water company property and that the private property for which he had permission to hunt was about a mile away. The hunter was arrested and charged with Illegal Deer Hunting, Failure to Wear Fluorescent Orange, and Criminal Trespass 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Meanwhile, Officer Bull was in the same block of woods posing as a hunter. He was wearing fluorescent orange and carrying an unloaded .22 rifle. He encountered three hunters and engaged them in conversation. They told him that they had been hunting the water company and surrounding properties for fifty years and had shot hundreds of deer. When Officer Bull asked about the presence of game wardens, the men spoke of the wardens in very unflattering terms. Officer Bull walked with them to their hunting camp, which was some distance away. The other officers were already at the camp and the three men were arrested and charged with Deer Hunting without the Written Permission of the Landowner and Failure to Wear Fluorescent Orange.

### **Boating Incidents**



**Boating Accident**

On 8/12/05, EnCon Police Officer Jason Williams responded to a boating accident on Pachaug Pond in Griswold. The Officer determined that a 48 year-old male had borrowed a friend's 12 ft. aluminum boat equipped with an 8 hp outboard motor and while operating the boat lost control and fell overboard. The unmanned boat, at full throttle, then circled the operator and struck him in the head. The victim was able to swim to shore. He was then transported to the hospital where he received stitches for a laceration



to his head. He was issued a written warning for Operation of a Vessel without a Boating Certificate.

On 8/1/05 at approximately 4:30 a.m., EnCon Police Sgt. Bob Zabilansky and Officer Bill Myers responded to a report of a boating accident on the Connecticut Ricer in the Town of Haddam. The vessel owner reported that his son had been operating the vessel and had struck a navigation buoy at about 1:30 a.m. The vessel operator then tried to drive the damaged vessel to a marina, but it sunk about three miles from the accident scene in Essex. The operator and three passengers swam ashore and went home. The overturned vessel was recovered with a large hole in the bow. No injuries were reported. Officer Myers is conducting the investigation.

### **Narcotics/Assault Incidents**

On 8/2/05, EnCon Police Officer Joe Ruggiero was on patrol at the Millers Pond State Park where he observed a female, who was among a group of eleven people, smoking a blunt (cigar packed with marijuana). When Officer Ruggiero approached her, she unsuccessfully tried to hide the blunt. She admitted that she had a small bag of marijuana in her vehicle. Officer Ruggiero retrieved the bag of marijuana. Upon arresting her for the marijuana offense, Officer Ruggiero searched the accused's backpack and found a block of crack cocaine that weighed approximately 63 grams. The 21-year old New Britain resident was also charged with Felony Possession of Narcotics.

On the evening of 8/13/05, Special Conservation Officer Dave Blanchette was dispatched to Hopeville Pond State Park Campground in Griswold for a disturbance. Upon his arrival, Officer Blanchette learned that a campground employee had notified a group of campers that the campground was full and that they could not set up at a reserved campsite. A 26 year-old male became very belligerent and followed the employee to his vehicle and threatened to harm him when he left the park. Officer Blanchette approached the suspect and ordered him to place his hands on a picnic table and began to pat him down for weapons. The suspect became uncooperative and turned towards the officer with a clenched fist. Officer Blanchette had to physically force the combative subject to the ground. During the scuffle, Officer Blanchette received several injuries, including a chipped tooth and upper body sprains. The suspect, who is presently on probation, was arrested and faces numerous criminal charges.

On 10/22/05, EnCon Police Officer Eric Johnson stopped to check a vehicle parked on Chewink Road in the Town of Chaplin. While approaching the lone male occupant, Officer Johnson observed him to make several furtive movements within the vehicle. Officer Johnson obtained his operator's license at which point the subject got out of the pickup truck and tried to hide what appeared to be narcotics in his pants. He refused to obey the commands of the officer and made a threatening move towards the officer, who then used his pepper spray to fend off the subject. The subject quickly got in his truck and fled the scene. Officer Johnson pursued the suspect for a short distance when he turned on to a woods road and escaped. Several law enforcement agencies responded and

searched for the suspect with negative results. Officer Johnson has submitted an arrest warrant application to charge the suspect, a convicted felon, with Interfering with an Officer, Engaging an Officer in Pursuit, Reckless Endangerment 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, and Reckless Driving.

## **WESTERN DISTRICT**

The Western District is comprised of the 96 towns in the western half of Connecticut. Captain Raul Camejo is the District commanding officer. The territory that the district encompasses covers a wide variety of terrain and population densities. The District is divided into two patrol sectors, each supervised by a Sergeant. The Northwest Sector stretches from the highest point in Connecticut and the Litchfield Hills to the Connecticut River Valley. The population of the Northwest Sector varies from sparsely populated farm and forest areas in the northwest corner to the densely populated areas of greater Hartford. The Southwest Sector, which was primarily farmland in the past, is now large tracts of suburban development and industrial parks with pockets of forest and farmland. The Southwest Sector also covers the highly industrialized lower Naugatuck Valley, Waterbury, Danbury and the towns surrounding Bridgeport and New Haven.



**Western District Officers**

Officers assigned to the Western District are responsible for patrolling the larger inland water bodies including Connecticut's largest lakes. These include Lake Candlewood; Bantam Lake, Highland Lake, Winchester Lake, Twin Lakes, Lake Zoar, Lake Lillinonah and Lake Housatonic. In addition to the smaller lakes, ponds and rivers, the Western District is also responsible for the Connecticut River from the Massachusetts border to Portland and the Housatonic River from Massachusetts to Shelton.



#### **Northwest Sector Snowmobile Patrol**

The Lake Patrol Sergeant is assigned to the Western District and is responsible for supervision of the Candlewood Lake Marine Patrol and the Lake Housatonic Marine Patrol. The officers employed by the two marine patrols have limited authority to enforce boating infractions and violations. EnCon Police officers are responsible for all serious boating violations and any criminal violations that occur on the water. During 2005 EnCon Police officers dedicated 2113 hours of patrol time to Candlewood Lake. 505 of the hours were for boating enforcement patrols. EnCon Police Officers made 142 arrests and issued 50 written warnings on Candlewood Lake for the year, 105 of the arrests and 15 of the written warnings were for boating violations. Candlewood Lake Marine Patrol officers provided assistance to the EnCon Police by providing 1841 hours of boating safety patrols on Candlewood Lake. Candlewood Lake officers issued 116 infractions and 26 written warnings for boating violations.

#### **Recreational Vehicle Enforcement**

With the continued growth in complaints regarding recreational vehicles, EnCon Police purchased additional all terrain vehicles for patrol use. A training program was

implemented and a number of the Western District officers attended. Western District officers responded to 164 recreational vehicle complaints, made 71 arrests and issued 15 written warnings during 2005.



**EnCon Police Officers Participating in ATV Operation**





## **WESTERN DISTRICT MAJOR CASES**

### **Hunting Incidents**

On 1/27/2005, at approximately 11:45 p.m., Environmental Conservation Police Officer John Hey was contacted by the Weston Animal Control Officer who reported that there several individuals in the woods with flashlights off of Tubbs Rd. Officer Hey and members of the Weston Police Department responded to the location. A Weston officer stopped a vehicle in the area, which was occupied by three subjects and found three deer in the back, two of which were untagged. Officer Hey arrived and located two compound bows and one crossbow in the vehicle. Two of the subjects admitted to killing the untagged deer and they admitted that they did not have valid landowner's consent for the property the deer were killed on. The subject with the tagged deer also did not have valid landowner's consent for the property that the deer was killed on. All three subjects were arrested for deer hunting violations. Officer Hey had been receiving information over the past two years regarding the illegal deer hunting activities of the subjects which culminated with these arrests.

On 11/23/05, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Tim Hill was patrolling an area in Suffield where he observed a pickup truck being operated on a dirt road on private property. Officer Hill observed one person sitting on a toolbox in the back of the pickup truck holding a rifle. Upon stopping the vehicle, Officer Hill observed a field dressed deer in the back of the truck that was untagged. Officer Hill determined that the three individuals in the truck did not have written permission to hunt on the property. Officer Hill arrested all three for Hunting without Written Consent of the Landowner and one of the subjects for Failure to Tag a Deer.

On 11/24/05, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Stan Kucia and Tim Hill responded a complaint of illegal deer hunters on MDC property in Colebrook. Officers Kucia and Hill located footprints in the snow and tracked down a hunter, dressed in camouflage clothing. The hunter did not have permission to be on the property and did not have proper deer tags. Officer Hill continued following another set of footprints to a residence near the MDC property. Officer Hill determined that the brother of the first hunter stopped had gone to the residence. This subject admitted to Officer Hill that he had been deer hunting with his brother and father on MDC property. Officers Hill and Kucia then continued tracking and located the father of the two subjects who was hunting on MDC property without permission and the required fluorescent orange clothing. One of the subjects was arrested for Illegal Deer Hunting and the other two for Hunting Deer with an Invalid Permit and Hunting without the Required Orange Clothing.

### **Criminal Investigations**

On 2/8/05, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Tim Hill responded to a reported break-in at the D.E.P.'s Farmington Headquarters. He discovered that the vacant state-owned house on the property had been broken into and vandalized. Through his investigation Officer Hill was able to determine that on the previous evening, nine area



youths had cut the lock to the access road onto the property and then broke into the house. They had a party in the house, started a fire in the fireplace and broke numerous inside windows. Several of the youths also stole a truckload of lumber that was on the premises. Officer Hill obtained the seven arrest warrants for area teenagers that were involved. The charges included Burglary in the Third Degree, Trespass in the Second Degree and Criminal Mischief.

During the last week of May there were nine reported burglaries of parked vehicles in and around the Lake Wintergreen/West Rock State Park area in Hamden. On 5/30/05 Environmental Conservation Police officers placed the area under surveillance and observed a subject approach a parked vehicle, break a window and remove a pocketbook from the vehicle. When approached by the EnCon officers the subject attempted to flee through the woods, but was apprehended after a short foot chase. When the accused was taken into custody and searched, drug paraphernalia was discovered on his person. It was determined that the subject had a lengthy criminal record. The subject was arrested for Burglary 3rd degree, Interfering with an officer, Possession of drug paraphernalia, Possession of burglary tools, Breach of peace, Credit card theft, Criminal mischief and Larceny 6th degree.

On the evening of 7/23/05, Environmental Conservation Police officer Chris Dwyer was on patrol in the Oxford Reservoir section of the Naugatuck State Forest. While doing so he located several people who were illegally in the area during closing hours. It was determined that one subject, a 20 year old male, was wanted on an active arrest warrant by the Wilton Police Department. While Officer Dwyer was taking the suspect into custody, he broke away and ran into the woods. Officer Dwyer called for immediate assistance from the State and local Police and initiated a foot pursuit. The Officer eventually apprehended the suspect after the subject's friends contacted him by cell phone. They told the suspect to come out of the woods and get into their car. When the subject came out of the woods and entered the car, the friends exited the vehicle and Officer Dwyer was able to take him into custody. The accused was placed under arrest and processed for Breach of Peace, Interfering with an officer, Escape from custody and Violation of hours of operation in a state park/forest.

On 8/3/05, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Paul Hilli was contacted by a confidential informant who advised him of a person growing marijuana behind a house in Goshen. Officer Hilli contacted the Connecticut State Police and worked with a Trooper to conduct surveillance of the residence. As a result of the surveillance a search warrant was obtained and served by members of the EnCon Police Division and the State Police. 17 marijuana plants, a quantity of harvested marijuana and drug paraphernalia were seized. The subject in the house admitted that the marijuana was his and was arrested by the State Police for Cultivation of marijuana, Possession of marijuana with the intent to sell and Possession of drug paraphernalia.

## **Wildlife Incidents**

On 8/21/05, Environmental Conservation Police officers responded to a report from State Police Troop B that a moose was running in and out of the woods onto RT 63 in Goshen. Troopers were unable to persuade the moose to go back into the forest. EnCon Police Officer Matt Tomassone arrived at the scene and determined that the moose appeared to be suffering from a severe physical disability. As a result, Officer Tomassone euthanized the moose. It was later confirmed by wildlife biologists that the moose was inflicted with a brain worm.

On 4/15/2005, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Paul Hilli responded to the town of Litchfield on a report that a man had been attacked by a bobcat. The bobcat was reported to still be in the complainants' basement. Upon arriving, Officer Hilli learned that the man had gone into the basement of his mother's home to check to see if an animal had gotten inside. As he went into the basement, the bobcat attacked him, biting and scratching his legs and hands. Officer Keith Schneider responded to the scene to assist Officer Hilli. The bobcat was very aggressive and for their protection the officers were forced to shoot the bobcat through an open window of the basement. The animal was taken to the State Health Lab in Hartford for testing and on 4/16/2005, the lab reported that the bobcat had tested positive for rabies.

## **Boating Fatalities**

On 9/1/05, Environmental Conservation Police officers received a report of a sailboat accident on West Hill Pond in Barkhamsted. Officers arrived and found that a sailboat had overturned and ejected the male occupant who was found underwater. The victim was pulled from the water by emergency personnel and transported to Hartford Hospital by LifeStar helicopter. Medical personnel were unable to revive the 68 year old victim. Investigation by EnCon officers determined that the victim apparently drowned after falling out of the boat.

On 9/4/05, Environmental Conservation Police officers responded to a water skiing accident on Lake Zoar in Southbury. The 35 year old male water-skier had fallen into the water and was unresponsive. Emergency personnel at the scene administered CPR and the victim was transported to Waterbury Hospital where medical personnel were unable to revive him. Results of an autopsy performed by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner determined that the victim, who had a history of heart problems, had died from a heart attack.

## **Off Duty Apprehension**

On 11/27/05, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Ed Yescott was off duty in his assigned state vehicle in the town of Burlington. Officer Yescott heard a broadcast on the State Police radio that an armed robbery had just occurred at the Dunkin Donuts store in Burlington. A description of the vehicle was given along with the license plate number.

Within a short time, Officer Yescott observed the suspect vehicle drive by him. Officer Yescott followed the vehicle and notified the State Police of his direction of travel. Before back up could arrive, Officer Yescott followed the vehicle to a private residence in Canton. When the vehicle pulled into the driveway of the residence Officer Yescott blocked the suspect vehicle with his assigned vehicle and held the two subjects at gunpoint until the arrival of the Canton Police and State Police.

### 2005 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

<b>Incident Type</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>	<b>Number of Arrests</b>	<b>Number of Warnings</b>
Hunting & Trapping	1,050	166	90
Fishing	1,125	393	297
Boating	1,486	694	286
Motor Vehicle	919	497	180
Park & Forest	1,387	504	244
Off Road Vehicles	598	295	66
Vice, Alcohol & Drugs	443	349	73
Crimes against persons	98	24	3
Crimes against property	243	6	2
Safety & Medical	966	2	1
Search & Rescue	20		
Missing Person	35		
Nuisance Bear	1,788		
Sick, Injured & Nuisance Wildlife	1,008	1	
Other	15	2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,181</b>	<b>2,933</b>	<b>1,242</b>



